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SUBJECT: ATA TRAINING FILLS GAP IN GON SECURITY PREPARATIONS

REF: A. STATE 209313 B. ABUJA 1770

1. Summary: From October 27 through 31, 2003 Embassy Abuja hosted an ATA sponsored Weapons of Mass Destruction and Postal Management Training Course. The course was well received by the GON with significant representation from practically all elements of the federal government. All participants were first responders or decision-makers within the GON. Upon conclusion of the training many participants expressed their appreciation to the USG for providing this opportunity. Practically all participants requested add on instructions not only in WMD but other security related training areas including combating of terrorism. End summary

2. WMD was the buzz word for the participants of the ATA 4715 Weapons of Mass Destruction and Postal Management Training Course taught at the Sheraton Hotel from October 27 through 31, 2003. If you did not have an ATA black carry bag bearing the Diplomatic Security Service badge and seal you were a nobody. Although day one started off with approximately 61 participants registering, the GON was able to mobilized a significant countrywide representation of the WMD brotherhood and on day two, 93 participants from a multitude of WMD first responder agencies eagerly arrived to receive their instructions.

3. The GON participants, representing a broad spectrum of first responders and strategic planners, readily admitted their organizations were ill prepared to meet the WMD chemical and biological threat. Representatives from the Nigerian Police Service, Nigerian Fire Service, Nigerian Postal Service, Federal Ministry of Environment, Emergency Medical Service Headquarters, the State House home of the Presidency, Abuja Bomb Squad, Airforce, Navy, Army, State Security Service and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs admitted GON lack of preparedness in this key area.

4. Most participants expressed their appreciation for the WMD training to RSO Abuja. Several participants informed RSO Abuja they were responsible for creating and implementing a GON WMD National Plan that requires approval by the Presidency. One senior Nigerian Police Service official mentioned that the lack of a viable WMD plan was the weak link in their security arrangements currently in progress to ensure the safety and security of over 32 Heads of Government and the Queen of England scheduled to visit Abuja for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit to begin December 3, 2003. One high ranking official working at the Ministry of Environment admitted this training closes a very big gap in the GON security planning.

5. During the post graduation ceremonies, practically all participants from all services and ministries requested additional add on training, especially in the area of combating terrorism.

6. As a result of this course, the GON will be receptive to future training offers. Therefore, post requests consideration be given to offer the GON additional WMD add on training. In addition to the additional WMD add on training, RSO Abuja requests that ATA VIP personal protection training also be offered to the GON. RSO Abuja advises that once the New Embassy Compound opens O/A March 2005, the profile for this mission will rise considerably. It is only a matter of time before a personal protection detail will need to be implemented on a full time basis for the Chief of Mission. If the ATA VIP personal protection training is offered, RSO Abuja requests funding to accompany the contingent for their course of training.

7. Post would like to thank the key players and trainers Darcus Halmilton, Neill Oster, Eric Sorchik, Paul Argo, Daniel Peterlick, and Robert McDonnell for a superlative performance and a job well done. Meese